

Positive theology

1. Christianity is an historical religion: its origins were at a given time and place, in a given historical milieu; its basic self-expression is contained in sacred texts; its basic outlook is traditional, handing on the good news of the risen Xti; its tradition has grown in consciousness, explicitness, down the ages. /period
2. Four main factors have influenced and shaped the positive theology of the post mediaeval
a) Invention of Printing (Gutenberg Galaxy, Marshal MacLuhan)
whence texts translations critical editions of scriptures fathers councils theologians
also secondary tertiary literature: articles monographs surveys reviews
b) Decadence of Scholasticism (beginning 14th century; end often announced, less clear)
Positive as an alternative to scholasticism (which is attacked, ignored, disregarded, soft-pedalled, deprecated): antiquarian erudition for its own sake; Jansenism Gallicanism; "dogmatic" theology in sense of omitting all QQ DD, attending to essentials
Positive as a corrective, complement, to scholasticism: Melchior Cano
c) As the weapon of controversy, apologetic; varying with contemporary need
Church and state (boniface VIII, Marsilius of Padua, Bodin, etc.)
Reformation, Jansenism, Classicism (Taan, Xtian humanism, Enlightenment), Romanticism, Idealism, Historicismus, Phenomenology, Existentialism.
d) As a specific scientific method and technique: theology in oratio obliqua;
what did Isaias Paul John Justin Irenaeus Athanasius Augustine Aquinas think about God and all things in relation to God; how did they thematize knowl of God mediat by corpus Xti
It narrates the theology of particular writers; its main divisions are biblical pontifical conciliar patristic mediaeval modern contemporary; its concern is the availability of "experiential objectivity" (is my hand white? Vatican I wished to defend traditional view on world created for glory of God, but unaware that Aquinas had said "Deus quaerit gloriam suam non propter se sed propter nos" II-II 132 1 lm)
It is not the whole of theology but a functional part: it does not assign foundations of theology; it does not settle what all Catholics must believe; it does inquire how Catholics may understand systematically their beliefs; while it will fit in with (or demand adaptations of) foundational dogmatic systematic statements, it has its own distinctive function and relative autonomy. The existence of this autonomy and function is the existence of positive theology.

3. Distinctive function, relative autonomy, and so existence of Positive theology.

Just as there is a resistance of commonsense matters of fact to proposed philosophy, just as the empirical laws of natural science (falling bodies) possess an independence of scientific systems (Newton Einstein Heisenberg; experiments do not have to be repeated), so there is in texts a meaning and, often enough, an organic or genetic interlocking of meanings that is notably independent of one's own and one's adversaries Fragestellung, presuppositions preconceptions prepossessions prejudices

I do not mean that discovering meaning of text (interlocking meanings) is independent of RH and Th: inadequate RH means that one does not understand, mistaken Th means that one will keep on raising false problems -- I mean that persevering study of text will demand development of RH, that dialectical criticism will reveal subterfuges of mistaken TH
Gratia operans -- NT on Christ, Son of Man, Lord, Preexistent Son (schemata)

I have compared this function and autonomy to that of empirical laws; but must add the differences (Inishgt: things related to us, commonsense; things related to one another, scientific explanation; Dilthey: Verstehen, Erklären) /implications
NS hypothesis (sharply defined rigorous deductions) verification (devising exper, testing)
Interpretation: not definition but you surely know what is meant; little deduction because no sharp definition; habitual nucleus of insights plus ad hoc insights.

Has been confused with "dogmatic" theology: but not restricted to common (ubique semper omnibus) clear certain; concerned with peculiar obscure doubtful; not limited to certain conclusions, science advances from doubt through less to greater probability; cumulative process
Confusion with dogmatic leads to wrong questions: positive concerned only with questions raised by text itself (not Aquinas on Boy Scouts, St John on Xti as man as God); reaches no answers that do not emerge from text itself (dogma introduces new categories); advances not by deductions proofs but by fuller scrutiny of known texts and discovery of further texts.

4. Determining text and setting: quis quid ubi ~~xxx~~ quibus auxiliis cur quomodo quando Interpreting text: cf. hermeneutics.

Dogmatic theology

1. Quomodo ab ecclesia definita doctrina contineatur in fontibus eo sensu quo 2314 3886

2. What are the fontes

- a) not anachronistically interpreted fontibus: Mt Mk Lk Jo Paul know all about Nicaea Chalcedon Const III Aug Aq -- they may have (scientia infusa) -- but the dogmatic theologian cannot base his conclusions on his conclusions -- he has to start from what is given -- NT does not speak of homousion, person, nature, substance, supernatural exclusion of simple minded deductivism, of proof texts in that sense the link between NT and dogmas is, in general, that what is truly stated in any context can be truly stated in any other sufficiently developed and sufficiently known context
- b) not the fontes as interpreted by romantic hermeneutics -- imaginative empathetic insight the goal of hermeneutics is not feeling the way Paul felt, not sharing Paul's insights, not talking Paul's language, but truly stating what Paul explicitly proclaimed to be true truth is transcendental; it can be transposed to any other context; it possesses in its essence what is independent of the subject and his mode of thought a hermeneutics that is not concerned with such truth is a useful heuristic device (provided imaginative insight stops well short of delirium) but it is not immediately relevant to the purposes of dogmatic theology which is concerned with truth and its transposition
- c) not the fontes as interpreted by naive historical realism - wie es eigentlich gewesen dogma proceeds not from the Fifth Gospel (the historical Jesus as concluded by die kritisch-historischen Methode) but from the Four Gospels, from the text of the NT dogmas are not what can eventually be established after the higher criticism has arrived at a satisfactory Life of Christ, a satisfactory history of the Urgemeinde, a complete explanation of the hermeneutic and historical puzzles of NT -- dogmas rest on the canonical texts, and the speculations of the critics have no other basis in fact
- d) not the fontes as the object of positive study, as a basis of a theology of the NT positive study is concerned with the peculiar obscure doubtful (complete explanation) and it is concerned with the immanent intelligibility of texts (not their illumination by hindsight with later developments) dogmatic interpretation takes its stand on what is common or developing, what is clear, what is certain, on broad lines rather than precise details, on many different and roughly equivalent statements in different contexts rather than specialized examination of a single writer considered in and for himself -- its selection is based on hindsight while positive and dogmatic study of NT are not identical, neither may they conflict; source of conflict is anachronistic dogmatist, romantic hermeneutics, naive historical realism

3. What are the defined doctrines

- a) primarily the actually defined doctrines, because we know exactly what they are -- but secondarily and in principle the potentially defined doctrines -- which ones? the ones that are seen to be definable by the same type of process that resulted in the definition
- b) not the actually defined dogmas taken at random and in isolation but connected sets which connections? subject (Trinity Christology Redemption Grace Church Sacraments Mariology De novissimis Revelation Inspiration), logical, systematic (Sum theol), evolution of dogma (DDT II, opposed order in dogmatic and systematic; DVI dogmatic is initial stage of systematic on hypostatic union; knowledge grace impeccability liberty of Xt (anthropology), redemption leads into Church sacraments action of Holy Spirit history) from vp of dogmatic theology: there are dogmas that presuppose other dogmas; their justification is just a complement of justification of more basic; hence, take full advantage of sequences (a) chronological, (b) logical presupposition, (c) systematic unity Homousion, divinity SpS, Cappadocian settlement, procession SpS, mystery (Nicaea, Const I, Quicumque, Lat IV, Lyons II, Flor, Vat I); mystery depends on theorem of spnt, but also serves to introduce systematic part on Trinity Arian Ephesus Chalcedon Const II Const III (prefix Adoptionist and Apollinarist)
- c) the quoad fieri possit unity of set of dogmas provides hindsight for dogmatic study of sources; conducted in terms of sources but with view to subsequent definition; eg christology (NT not one person two natures, but the "same" expected (Messias) present in gospel (Son of Man) present to Urgemeinde (Kurios) not deified man but preexistent Son; conceived by titles and transposed names (Son Lord name above every name God other titles glory; and by concepts of Hellenistic keryema (per quem omnia, aequalis, unum)

Dogmatic theology (2)

4. What is the link between sources and dogmas

a) f(understand the doctrine ::: understand history of the doctrine)

one cannot write history of mathematics medicine theology unless one understands science of math medicine theol: unable to select all that is significant in math med theol; unable to discriminate between important unimportant, breakthrough from fuss and feathers conversely, especially in theol, the doctrine does not possess its exact and full meaning apart from its history; dogmas are not a set of isolated propositions but solutions to problems, answers to questions, strategic decisions in explicitation of object of faith; to disregard their genesis, so far from simplifying the matter, creates endless difficulties instead of open-eyed appraisal of gradual process blind leap from NT to dogma

understanding the history

#just not#information on the history: endless information is compatible with no understanding and misunderstanding: eg Greek councils applied Greek philosophy to truths of faith; a widely accepted bit of nonsense

not understanding the whole historical process, every aspect of each writer's mind

but discovering the key moments in the genesis of that particular dogma: what were the blocks that had to be overcome; how did their removal take place

EG: Butterfield, Origins of Modern Science 1300-1800 -- not research on particular scientists between 1300-1800; not detailed report on research done by others; but higher level performance (up to about 1700 scientists could not free their own minds from Aristotelian presuppositions; thereafter science was sufficiently advanced for scientists to do so; that freedom is the beginning of modern science)

such a discovery has to arise from the data and so will differ for each key dogma; at the same time the blocks to be removed are apt to be constants, to reappear under another guise in the minds of students and in contemporary movements of thought

Tertullian Origen Athanasius -- Adoptionist Apollinarist Antiochene Alexandrian Chalcedon

b) the foregoing determines what exactly the problem is essentially yet concretely; the solution of the problem is to establish an identity between source and dogma

identity (1) is transition from implicit vécu to explicit thématique: such is the explicitation of invariants of human cognitional activity; cf. metaphysics as making explicit what everyone knows and constantly employs (transcendentals)

identity (2) is transposition from dramatico-practical to intellectual pattern of experience; its basis is that "whatever can be stated truly in any context, can be stated truly in any other sufficiently developed and sufficiently known context"; ground, the transcendence of truth, its independence of patterns of experience, to change pattern of experience is not to change truth but to change one's mode of apprehension and expression

identity (3) presupposes that (1) and (2) have been effected; it is the transition from premisses to conclusions, from logically implicit to logically explicit

c) certitude on the truth of the solution has its removes prohibens in grasping the problem and its solution; its motive is the ~~imf~~ guidance of the Holy Spirit in the church; its modality lies in the sociology of knowledge (the issue is not the individual settling things for himself (philosophy) but the Body of Christ attaining explicit consciousness)

Development of Dogma

Cf. "die Wendung zur Idee," "shift to system," "Class consciousness," "progress"

Unum multis commune (a) universal by abstraction (b) universal by diffusion, assimilation definition. A process of universalization socialization heightened consciousness

Universale in re: proper to Christ became common by diffusion to apostles disciples crowds, by apostolic preaching and apostolic succession

Universale in mente: quidquid recipitur... the one source and yet the differences of Paul Mark Matthew Luke John -- Jew and Gentile, slave and Free, male and female, though one in Xt, nonetheless each had his own mode of apprehension, mentality -- positive theology concentrates on these differences -- dogmatic theology emphasizes the common catholic faith there was a common belief with a common object -- that community prescinded from individual differences, constituted the quod ubique quod semper quod ab omnibus

Universale reflexum: supposes the common catholic belief, reflects on it, selects what is essential, decisive, strategic -- process of defining -- transition from commonsense to technical, from literary to literal meaning

cf. literal meaning in absolute sense: beyond problem of hermeneutics
commonsense statements about every day objects; scientific statements about scientific objects; philosophic and theological statements about philosophic and theological objects
commonsense vocabulary can only approximate to transcendent objects

one goes beyond mind of original writer inasmuch as one transposes to a technical context he did not know; one makes statements of the same truths inasmuch as one's transposition is adequate accurate

2. Dogmas obscure, gospels clear

3. Gospels religious, dogmas intellectualistic
development = (1) undifferentiated (2) differentiation (3) integration (mutual mediation)
as consciousness differentiates, religion must undergo a similar differentiation;
otherwise it becomes the affair of children and weaker-minded women

still, this is no defence of conceptualist aberration, which pits dogma against religion

(a) conceptualism is content with concepts, sole field of meaning, hence only dogmas

(b) conceptualism omits understanding, dogmas become mere formulas to be recited & believed

Xtian religion is mutual self-mediation before God within a tradition; it takes over the whole man -- it does so in field of truth through dogmas -- but the converse does not hold: there is a fides informis (1 Cor 13)

4. Development as differentiation of horizon

5. Dogmas and catechetics